

## CLAIMS

1. An image creating apparatus, comprising:
  - an input section that inputs various information;
  - 5 a display section that displays the various information;
  - a material data storage section that stores material data for creating computer graphics;
  - a text string/material correspondence table in which
  - 10 the material data is associated with a set of material names for the material data;
  - a hierarchical structural description that describes a feature of the material data in a hierarchical structure;
  - 15 a search section that, when the feature is input from the input section, searches for material data corresponding to the feature using the hierarchical structural description;
  - a registration section that stores the searched
  - 20 material data in the material data storage section and registers the searched material data and a material name of the material data with the text string/material correspondence table; and
  - a text string/CG conversion processing section that,
  - 25 when the material name is input from the input section, acquires material data corresponding to the material name using the text string/material correspondence table, and

creates the computer graphics using the acquired material data.

2. The image creating apparatus according to claim 1,  
5 wherein, when the feature is input, the search section refers to the hierarchical structural description, searches for a feature of a lower hierarchy than the input feature, and searches for material data corresponding to the searched feature of the lower hierarchy.

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3. The image creating apparatus according to claim 1, wherein, when the feature is input, the search section refers to the hierarchical structural description, searches for a feature of a higher hierarchy than the  
15 input feature, and searches for material data corresponding to the searched feature of the higher hierarchy.

4. The image creating apparatus according to claim 1,  
20 further comprising a display control section that displays a list of the searched feature in the display section, wherein, when a feature is selected from the list, the search section searches for material data for the selected feature.

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5. The image creating apparatus according to claim 4, wherein the display control section displays a list of

thumbnails of the material data for the feature selected from the list.

6. The image creating apparatus according to claim 4,  
5 wherein the display control section displays a predetermined number of features.

7. The image creating apparatus according to claim 1,  
wherein the feature is defined by an attribute and a value  
10 of the attribute.

8. The image creating apparatus according to claim 1,  
wherein:  
the hierarchical structural description describes  
15 the feature related to the material data stored on a network;  
the search section searches for the material data stored on the network; and  
the registration section registers the material data  
20 stored on the network.

9. The image creating apparatus according to claim 1,  
wherein:  
the text string/CG conversion processing section,  
25 when a text which designates the material name is input to an input screen, refers to the text string/material correspondence table and searches for a material name

with which the input text partially matches; and  
the display control section displays a list of the  
searched material name.

- 5 10. The image creating apparatus according to claim 1,  
wherein:

the material name is further associated with an  
expression adjective which indicates an expression;

- the text string/CG conversion processing section,  
10 when a text which designates the expression adjective  
is input, searches for the expression adjective with which  
the input text partially matches; and

the display control section displays the expression  
adjective.

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11. The image creating apparatus according to claim 1,  
wherein:

the material name is further associated with an  
expression adverb which indicates an expression;

- 20 the text string/CG conversion processing section,  
when a text which designates the expression adverb is  
input, searches for the expression adverb with which the  
input text partially matches; and

the display control section displays the expression  
25 adverb.

12. The image creating apparatus according to claim 1,

wherein:

the material data comprises at least one of action data, character data, object data, and set data;

the material name comprises an action name, a  
5 character name, an object name, and a set name  
corresponding to the action data, the character data,  
the object data, and the set data, respectively; and

the text string/material correspondence table  
comprises a text string/action correspondence table, a  
10 text string/character correspondence table, and a text  
string/set correspondence table corresponding to the  
action data, the character data, the object data, and  
the set data, respectively.

15 13. The image creating apparatus according to claim 12,  
wherein:

the action name is associated with the character  
data; and

the text string/CG conversion processing section  
20 searches for the action name corresponding to a selected  
character data.

14. The image creating apparatus according to claim 12,  
wherein:

25 the action data comprises an object; and  
the text string/CG conversion processing section,  
when an object name to indicate an object which the action

data comprises is input, acquires object data corresponding to the input object name and creates the computer graphics using the acquired object data.

5 15. The image creating apparatus according to claim 14, wherein the text string/CG conversion processing section, when a text which designates an object name to indicate an object which the action name comprises is input, refers to the text string/set correspondence table and searches  
10 for the object name with which the input text partially matches.

16. An image creating method, comprising the steps of:  
providing a text string/material correspondence  
15 table in which material data for creating computer graphics is associated with a set of material names of the material data;

providing a hierarchical structural description which describes a feature of the material data in a  
20 hierarchical structure;

searching for material data corresponding to the feature by using the hierarchical structural description when the feature is input;

storing the searched material data;  
25 registering the searched material data and the material name of the searched material data with the text string/material correspondence table;

acquiring material data corresponding to the material name by using the text string/material correspondence table when the material name is input; and

- 5       creating the computer graphics by using the acquired material data.